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tial qualities a comprehensive knowledge of one another's methods, there will grow up among us that unity of action which is the strength of all work.

OUR DUTY IN SMALL THINGS *

By ALICE LUCAS

SAIRY GAMP, with her ignorance, volubility, and bibulous proclivities, is a thing of the past. She was but a type of the old-time nurse who adopted the calling as a makeshift, having tried her hand at everything else and failed. Following closely upon her heels, in the days of our grandmothers, we see the care of the sick relegated to some old woman long since past her usefulness in other spheres. Later, if there happened to be a maiden aunt or indigent relative in the family, they were called upon to perform the offices of nurse, although oftentimes they knew no more of nursing than of Sanscrit. If none of these individuals could be procured, the poor unfortunate was confided to the tender mercies (?) of a hired attendant, generally a woman of the lower class, with no education and less common-sense, who generally looked out for her own comfort rather than that of her patient. But the day was fast drawing near when better times were at hand; and although it took the mighty struggle and agony of the Crimean War to bring before the public the large-hearted sympathy and heroic endeavors of Florence Nightingale, yet it establishes forever among the nations of the civilized world that important adjunct to modern existence—the *trained* nurse.

Glancing back over a period of some forty years, we recall to mind the illiterate, immoral, and intemperate—in fact, thoroughly incompetent in every way—woman who stood in place of our trained nurses of to-day. In contrast we have women of large intelligence, thoroughly trained faculties, and purity of life. Women were found who would subject themselves to strict discipline, severe physical and mental labor, the oftentimes uncongenial duties, that they might gain through experience that knowledge that would enable them to become the faithful and competent assistants of the physicians, with whom they must work shoulder to shoulder in their labor of love to uplift and relieve suffering humanity. As the years have passed, the standard of the profession has been constantly advancing. While it is charged against us that many enter it from a love of romanticism, the hope of financial reward, or the

* Read at the Graduate Nurses' Association, Springfield, Mass., December, 1904.

desire to be professional, yet I trust that by far the largest majority go forth into this life with its onerous duties and self-sacrifice with a thoughtful consideration of all the responsibilities that such an undertaking involves.

We cannot all be Florence Nightingales; we cannot all go when the summons of the war-trumpet shall sound through the land; the most of our names will never be recorded upon the Roll of Fame, and may never be known outside of our own little world, but we can *each in our own place* prove faithful to our duty and the great truths that we represent, and when the Book of Life is unrolled, may we not hope to find our names there because "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

So much has been said and written in regard to what a nurse of the present day should or should not be that little more remains to be said; yet we all have our own ideals and standards of character, and it remains, after all, for each nurse to make her particular work individual—to infuse into it something of her own personality—that it may be distinctly her own. Just so much of success will we gain according to the amount of *ourselves* we put into it. The Old Masters of art and sculpture are dead, yet their works shall remain for all time as models of the beautiful, because in each the individuality of the maker still lives. They put forth the best that was in them, and behold, the cold marble, the silent canvas, speaks to us, who may take their example and model our work by putting something of the best we have to give into each one. Our own courage, versatility, and ability, as well as our professional skill, stand for us at every turn to create confidence in our patients and to lay the foundation for usefulness and power in their lives. The more of true womanliness, feminine grace and charm, that we can throw into our work, the more opportunity to do good and to uphold the honor of the profession and maintain it before the world shall we have. If we have foresight, quickness to divine the right, intuitive adaptation of means to ends, it will mean all the difference between success and failure, and the meanest individual with whom we come in contact will feel and recognize it. Our highest work as nurses is not simply to use the technical skill we have acquired, but to so influence the lives of our patients as to inspire or aid them to a better and higher existence. The healing of the body may prove but the channel through which we may reach that which is infinitely greater—the spirit. We are dealing with great issues—those of life and death,—and the greater the responsibilities involved the more we must look to it that our profession be respected and exalted.

The fact that many of us lead itinerant lives predisposes to a spirit

of restlessness and unhappiness. Happiness is, after all, but the adjustment of the individual needs to the eternal laws—may we not all have it *within* ourselves?

To all strong natures must come criticism of our conduct, our methods of work, our life. To meet and overcome these one by one, in the true spirit, will only develop and build character, and, after all, no matter what our profession, this is the great aim we are all striving for—a life that has helped some other bear the heat and burden of the day. It is ours to be “great or little by our own wills.”

“ If through long,
Prosaic years we do not tire,
Can in small things be tried and true—
This is to live as heroes do.”

ANCON HOSPITAL, PANAMA

BY THE NURSING STAFF

IN 1898 there was a feeling of great indignation among women in general, and nurses in particular, because the United States Government was tardy in recognizing the worth of the woman nurse at the front. That it has learned her value has been well illustrated by the fact that in the original scheme of organization framed by the late Isthmian Canal Commission a chief nurse and two assistants were appointed, assigned to duty, and sent down to Panama at the same time as the Chief Engineer, Mr. Wallace, and Chief Sanitary Officer, Colonel W. C. Gorgas.

It now remains with the nurses of America to prove whether, having gained this recognition, they are sufficiently patriotic, when their services are needed, to run the few risks and put up with the slight inconveniences inseparable from pioneer work in a foreign country.

It is a well-known fact that England's best nurses are to be found in her army and government service, as only those of refinement and capabilities above the average are admitted to what is by them considered the most honorable posts in their profession.

There have been so many erroneous and exaggerated statements made regarding the conditions in the hospitals of Panama and the status of the nurses employed there that we, the nurses of Ancon, feel it incumbent upon us to refute these charges, not only because we know that they are keeping nurses of good standing from joining us, but also